

## The HOME BEAUTIFUL

### Flowers and Shrubbery

### Their Care and Cultivation



An Artistic Arrangement.

#### TABLE DECORATIONS

By EEN E. REXFORD.

I fancy some readers saying we cannot all have flowers for the table. Greenhouses are not to be found in every little village. Even if they were, many of us could not afford to purchase from them except on very extra occasions.

True, but why not grow your own plants? Then you will be indeed independent of the florist to a considerable extent.

Most women have plants in the windows, but the majority are not adapted to table use.

The table plant for this purpose, all things considered, is the asparagus plumosus. It has foliage much daintier than that of any fern.

It can easily be made to grow in the bushy compact form which a plant designed for use on the table should have.

This is done by pinching off the ends of the young fronds when they have made a growth of 12 or 18 inches. This causes the lower side branches to spread out broadly and breadth is secured where there would be little if the plant were allowed to train itself.

Such a plant is very attractive in itself with its filmy green foliage, comparable only to lace, or mist, in its delicacy.

But whenever additional brightness is desired a few long-stemmed flowers thrust in among its fronds will furnish it in a most delightful manner. Roses, carnations, narcissus, astilbe, stevia all these and many more can be used with it with most charming effect.

Have three or four plants of it and you will have but little use for the florist. They will be quite as attractive in the window as any other plants that can be grown there, therefore they will serve a double purpose.

Give this asparagus a soil of garden loam made light with sand. Water moderately. Sunshine is not necessary to its successful culture.

Shower several times a week and keep red spiders from injuring it. Be sure to nip off the end of each shoot, as advised above, to make the plant spread out well.

Many plants can be secured of the florists and these can be divided next season. One good sized plant can be made to serve as half a dozen small plants in the spring, each one of which will become quite large enough for the table use by fall.

A combination of ferns can be easily grown for use on the table. The broad-leaved pteris, the fine-leaved adiantums go well together.

The grace of these plants is adapted to the table where quality is considered as more important than quantity.

A combination of ferns of different variety with plants having pretty foliage in color is beautiful. In this case peperomia and tradescantia are used to supply the desired effect.

Fern pans filled with small plants of varieties best calculated to give successful results in the living room, can be bought of nearly all the florists. One should not depend upon a single specimen. Have two, three or more to admit of frequent change.

Few plants can be kept on the table

day after day without becoming unhealthy. Have several and allow none of them to do decorative duty for longer than a day or two at a time.

At holiday time there will be attractive plants on the market and some of these are admirably adapted to table use.

There is the Jerusalem cherry, a miniature bearing scarlet fruit, and the ardisia, a plant with rich, dark foliage against which its dark, red berries show to most pleasing effect.

Small plants of araucarias are not pretty but are so peculiar in habit that they always attract attention and challenge admiration.

A plant of poinsettia with its scarlet flowering will make the table radiant with its wealth of color.

Pots of Roman hyacinth are charming adjuncts of the breakfast table, as are lilies of the valley or narcissus. These will last for a long time if they are removed to the window as soon as the meal is over.

There are several kinds of begonia that show to excellent advantage on the table by lamplight. One is glory de lorraine.

Its flowers, of which there will be so many that the plant is literally covered, provided it is well grown, are of that peculiar shade of pink which comes out well by artificial light.

Small specimens of the Whitman fern are very satisfactory when used in jardiniere whose colors contrast and harmonize with their rich green. One of cream or a pure white will be found very effective.

No jardiniere of strong color or prominent ornamentation should be used with these plants, because it is the plant you want others to admire, not the vessel containing it.

#### FLORAL WORK FOR WINTER

Nothing is better for winter bloomers, or for hanging basket plants than the Grand Duchess oxalis. Put the little bulbs in light soil, keep in a temperature of about sixty degrees and keep the soil moist until the leaves appear, and gradually increase the water as the plants require it. When the leaves appear above the soil, give it a good light and watch it grow and bloom.

Most herbaceous perennials are heavy feeders, and a thorough enrichment of the lower soil is of great importance. Top dressing every fall should be well attended to, and this should be forked into the soil in the spring, after the freezing is done.

Are your neighbors' plants finer and better than yours? If so, there is a reason for it, and you should seek to find out what it is and profit by the knowledge.

Hurry your order for bulbs and plants. Have your pots ready for them when they come.

#### Potting Soil.

Lay in a supply of potting soil now, so if need arises for soil when the ground is frozen or covered with snow it can be met. Equal parts of good garden soil, old, well-rotted manure, leaf mold and sand should be stirred well together, sifted through a coarse sieve and stored under shelter in boxes and barrels.

#### IN THE SEASON OF OYSTERS

Excellent Ways in Which They Can Be Served to Those Who Are Fond of Them.

The practical housekeeper begins to worry as she sees her summer fruits slipping away. She does her best to make good use of the fresh lima beans, string beans, tomatoes, peaches, pears and berries. What she cannot serve fresh and in pies she cans and preserves.

She worries at the idea of having meat every day and sometimes twice when other foods become scarce and costly. It is father or perhaps one of the big boys in the family who suggests that oyster season has just begun and that these are far cheaper and more nutritious than many costly cuts of meat.

**Sauce for Raw Oysters.**—Take one dessertspoonful of tarragon vinegar, one tablespoonful of olive oil, one-half teaspoonful of worcestershire sauce, the juice of half a lemon and one-half teaspoonful of tabasco sauce. Add a little salt and half an onion, grated fine.

**Oyster Cocktail.**—For each glass take six small oysters, two teaspoonfuls lemon juice, one teaspoonful worcestershire sauce, two tablespoonfuls tomato catchup, a dash of tabasco sauce, a pinch of salt and a little sugar. Serve ice cold.

**Oyster Cocktail.**—Have oysters very cold. Put not more than six in each cocktail glass or sherbet cup, and just before sending to the table cover with a dressing made in the following way: Mix together one tablespoonful of mushroom catchup, two tablespoonfuls of strained lemon juice, five drops of tabasco sauce and salt to taste. This quantity will make three cocktails. Serve thin slices of brown bread and celery with the cocktails.

#### Chocolate Crullers.

Cream two tablespoonfuls butter and one-half of a cupful of sugar, gradually add the beaten yolks of three eggs and one and one-half cupfuls more of sugar, one cupful of sour milk, one teaspoonful vanilla, two ounces chocolate grated and melted over hot water, one-third of a teaspoonful of soda dissolved in one-half of a teaspoonful of boiling water, the whites of the eggs whipped to a stiff froth and sufficient sifted flour to make a soft dough. Roll out, cut into oblongs; divide each into three strips, leaving the dough united at one end. Braid loosely, pinch the ends together and cook until golden brown in sparkling-hot fat.

#### Grape Jam.

Stem the grapes and wash them, then put over the fire to cook without water, mashing them frequently as the cooking proceeds. When thoroughly cooked, about 15 minutes is necessary for this process, press through a sieve, then measure and return to the fire, cook 15 minutes, then add three-quarters of a pint of sugar to a pint of pulp and cook half an hour or until thick. Pour into glasses and seal when cold.

#### Roasted Squash.

I have found that steaming squash in the meat roaster is far superior to steaming it on top of the stove. After washing the squash cut it up, without paring, into about three-inch pieces, put it in the pan with a few tablespoonfuls of water to prevent burning, and cover. The squash cooks much quicker and is drier and richer than that cooked in the old way.—Good Housekeeping.

#### Burned Pane.

If by any chance anything being cooked in a saucepan burns fill it when the cooking is done, with cold water to which a good spoonful of salt has been added, and leave to soak till next day. Then heat slowly, and by the time the water boils the burnt portion will have been loosened and will come off quite easily.

#### To Iron a Centerpiece.

Do not stretch the round centerpiece on the bias before ironing, but treat it as though it were square. Stretch first with the warp, then with the woof of the material, and iron in the same way. The result will be a perfectly smooth, round surface.

#### Cranberries With Dates.

To a quart of cranberries add half a pound or more of seeded dates and about half as much sugar as you would without the dates. Cook until soft.

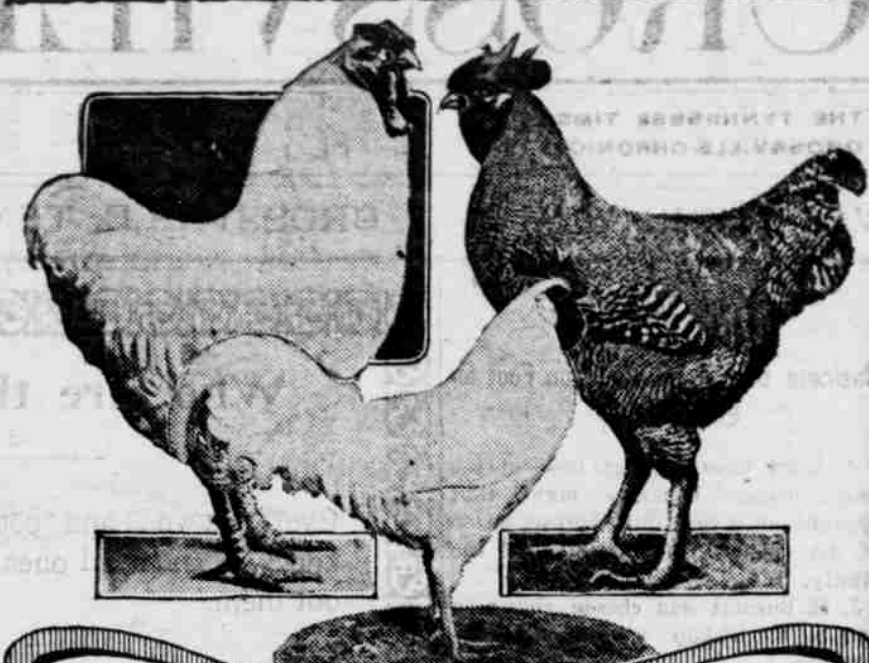
#### New Application of an Old Adage.

Proprietor—"I have about decided to employ a female bill collector. What do you think of the idea?" Bookkeeper—"Well, the idea may be all right, but I wouldn't advise you to do it." Proprietor—"What's the explanation?" Bookkeeper—"Because it is said that a woman's work is never done."

#### Slow Process, Sometimes.

By the terms of Christianity salvation is free, but sometimes it takes an awfully long time to lift the mortgage on a church.—Washington Post.

#### NO BEST BREED AMONG EGG PRODUCERS

WHITE  
WYANDOTTE

WHITE LEGHORN

BARRED  
PLYMOUTH ROCK

"Experience has shown that any variety of hen will lay, and lay abundantly, if bred along the right lines. If you are satisfied as to shape and color of your fowls, do not change for something else in the hope of getting more eggs, such as Leghorns for Plymouth Rocks, or Wyandottes for Minorcas or Brown Leghorns." This is the advice given by a breeder, who has found from experience that this changing is merely a waste of time and patience.

"One frequently sees or hears of a

poultry keeper whose birds lay profusely and almost incessantly, while a neighbor across the way has the same variety, gives his just as much attention, and yet they scarcely lay at all," continues this authority. "Now, while this neighbor has the same variety or breed of chickens as the other, he has not an egg-laying strain in that particular variety of breed, and that is just where the trouble is. To get a large egg yield one must have birds which were descended from an egg-producing strain."

#### BEST RATIONS FOR CHICKENS

Whole Grain is Entirely Too Fattening and Liable to Cause Some Kind of Digestive Trouble.

Most farmers feed too much whole grain to their chickens; many feeding nothing but grain. The feeding of a ration composed entirely of whole grain throws an undue strain upon the organs of the hens, which is likely to cause digestive troubles. Besides, whole grain is entirely too fattening and hens receiving such a ration are never thoroughly nourished, nor do they preceive the egg-making elements in the proportion to induce a good egg yield.

In feeding poultry best results are obtained by feeding one-half the food ground. The by-products of mills are usually richer in egg-making elements than the grains from which they are made. Thus, wheat bran is much richer in protein, the egg-making element, than whole wheat, and it is much cheaper. The same can be said of middlings.

The ground ration should be bulky in character, that is it should occupy a rather large bulk in proportion to its weight. A mash that has given good results is composed of two parts bran, one part each of cornmeal, middlings, cut clover, beef scrap and ground oats (with hulls sifted out). This mash can be fed dry in self-feeding hoppers, or as a wet mash. If skim milk or buttermilk is to be had in mixing the wet mash, the proportion of beef scrap can be reduced one-half.

#### SELECT THE BEST COCKEREL

Don't Sacrifice Vim and Ginger by Keeping Dapper Little Male Birds—Size is Desired.

Don't sacrifice the long, rangy cockerel until you are sure that he isn't a better bird than some of his more "cocky" brethren. Sometimes the early maturing cockerel stops right there and makes little further growth, while the bird that has gone to legs and bone at first fills out and makes the larger and more desirable bird for the farm flock.

Size is usually desirable in any flock, if vim and ginger go with it. Don't sacrifice it by keeping only the dapper little male birds that looked like their dads when they were only four or five months old.

#### Massachusetts Mash Formula.

Mash formula, used by the Massachusetts experimental station, with excellent results: Mix thoroughly equal weight of cornmeal, ground oats, flour middlings, gluten, bran, oil meal and beef scraps; then add one pound of salt to each 100 pounds of the mash. This may be fed dry or wet (moistened), not sloppy.

#### Hens Are Often Neglected.

Hens contribute enough to the nation's wealth to warrant them having buildings made especially for them, but they too often get whatever can't be used for anything else.

#### Clean the Poultry House.

Drive all hens out of the poultry house occasionally and, after cleaning thoroughly, treat it with a five per cent solution of coal tar disinfectant.

#### HINTS ON DUCKS AND GEES

Fowls Should Be Kept Away From Chickens—Furnish Supply of Animal Food—Avoid Dampness.

Ducks and geese should always be kept away from the chickens. If allowed in the same yards, the ducks and geese would so befoul the drinking water that the health of the chickens would always be in constant danger.

Ducks and geese should never be picked after the cool days of fall come. To grow rapidly the ration for ducks should include a liberal quantity of animal food. As long as the range is good, geese require little, if any feeding. But when the vegetation on the range is killed, they should be fed liberally twice a day. A good mash for geese is composed of two parts bran, one part each of middlings and cornmeal and four parts chopped vegetables, cut clover or alfalfa. Whole grain should be fed very sparingly.

Ducks and geese are subject to but one serious disease—rheumatism, caused by sleeping in damp quarters. They can stand any degree of dampness during the day, when they are exercising, but at night they should be kept comfortable and dry. The sleeping room should be kept bedded with clean, dry straw.

#### GIVE BREEDERS FAIR CHANCE

Insanitary Conditions Have Done More to Undermine Health of Poultry Than Anything Else.

Always give the breeders a fair chance to make good. Don't shut them up in a poorly ventilated and insanitary pen, give them poor food and attention and then expect them to lay eggs filled with strong, vigorous life germs. They can't do it. Give them a fair chance and they will always do their part.

Insanitary conditions have perhaps done more to undermine the health and vigor of poultry than any other one thing. Certainly it is a great handicap to the fowls, and they should not be forced to endure such conditions. Their battle for life is hard enough without making it harder. So help them by giving them a fair chance and you will be well paid for your time and trouble.

#### Weed Out Poor Hens.

There is a greater difference in the egg production of hens in the same flock than most people realize. In trap-nesting work with a small flock of 16 Plymouth Rocks for a year in Canada the best one laid 231 eggs and the poorest 71. It is a good thing to weed out the poor layers and consign them to the pot.

#### Don't Harbor Scrub Roosters.

There is no reason or excuse for harboring scrub roosters on any farm. If you have been doing so, send the scrubs to market now and get some purebred males to head your flocks next season. Scrub poultry is a positive abomination.

#### Pure Water is Important.

An egg contains about 66 per cent of water, which shows that it is very important for a flock to have plenty of pure water.